

# STRICTURES

ON

“A SERMON

*Preached before the Presbyterian Church, at Cheraw, S. C., Jan. 20, 1839,*

BY J. C. COIT,

Pastor of the Church.”

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BY H. A. C. WALKER,

OF THE S. C. CONFERENCE.

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#### INTRODUCTORY ANECDOTE.

Two brothers, the one, probably, seventeen years of age, and the other, perhaps, thirteen, were returning from school along the margin of a small river; when, on the opposite side, a lad between the two in years, began, without provocation, to abuse them and throw missiles. The elder brother disdained a conflict with so inferior an enemy; but the other, though younger than the foe, stripped—swam the river—gave the impudent fellow a sound drubbing, and returned triumphant.

*Application.*—I perceive that Dr. Capers thinks Mr. C's pamphlet unworthy his attention, unless it should appear that Mr. C. properly construes the Resolutions of Synod which he quotes; in which opinion, the doctor is, I believe, perfectly correct: but as the author of the following pages is, comparatively, but a lad, he may be allowed, without incurring any particular disgrace therefore, to handle this pamphlet; and if he seem to handle it rather roughly, let it be remembered that he thus treats it only where it is scaly, so as to knock them off and expose what lies beneath. Where the covering is more pervious, or flimsy, he has dealt more tenderly. But, in the light of the pamphlet, he thinks no one can blame him even if he have torn it to pieces, burned it to ashes, and scattered it to the four winds!



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## STRICTURES, &c.



I have just read a most singular production from the pen of the Rev. John C. Coit, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Cheraw; in which he attempts to show that Methodists are very heretics, most complacently blessing himself for the exclusive bigotry with which he regards them, esteeming this course as his "testimony to Christ and his Gospel."

Though I have studies and duties enough to occupy my time and attention, I cannot forbear expressing a few thoughts with respect to this "Sermon," as it is styled.

Without exception, it is, I think, the most unconnected composition which ever fell from the pen of *so great* a man; and its heterogeneous character reminds me of an anecdote which I once heard of an Irish doctor, who when applied to in a certain case, formed a compound of calomel, tartar, rhubarb, jalap, opium, &c. &c.; and when asked why he was throwing together such a discordant mass, answered,—“Sir, I am prescribing for an old woman under a complication of diseases, and I think if one of these fail, another may succeed.” The reader can make the application. *Great men*, however, are frequently very eccentric, which may account for the peculiar character of this work.

I think no where within forty-six pages have I seen so much bold *assertion*, with no firmer foundation than the paper upon which it is written, and no stronger proof to prop it than the *ipse dixit* of the writer. Now, Mr. Coit's penetrating, and (*as this pamphlet shows!*) logical and well trained mind, should have reflected, that in Cheraw there are some who pretend to think for themselves, and will not be satisfied with assertion, even from high authority, in place of solid proof. What he asserts, in many cases, I am aware, he affects to support by *reference* to Scripture; but even here, one would have supposed that a man who studied and practiced law so long as Mr. C., previous to his present calling, would have remembered, that if a person wish to make out his case, he should have his witnesses on the spot to testify in full, in place of referring to A. B. and C. as hav-

ing seen and heard all that passed. The array of Scripture reference at the foot of each page makes a great show, but that is all; for each one will be ready to ask, why were not the places referred to given in full? and many will say with a young man who read the work, "I would not look up all these places for Mr. C's Sermon." But it must not be forgotten, that if Mr. C. had given those places in full, or even those of them which are pertinent, there would have been less of his own word and his own spirit in the work, though much more of the Spirit and the Word of the Lord, and so Mr. C. would have been withholding "his testimony from Christ and his Gospel," and, as "*his* testimony" is indispensably important in this matter, of course he is excusable for protruding himself in the "Sermon," and taking up as little room as possible with quotations from the Book of God.

In this evidently labored effort of the learned author, there is very little "speech polite, and ornate phrase, and finished learning;" but this, I presume, results from the greatness of the mind from which the "Sermon" issued, and which, in its magnanimity and pious zeal, disregarded these ornaments, and in "speech, and phrase, and learning," suited to the vast importance of the occasion, and the Herculean work itself, drove toward the accomplishment of its object, without regarding the tinsel of modern composition, by observing which, a writer may avoid offending, wantonly, his friends and "neighbors,"—for we may not presume to call ourselves Mr. C's brethren.

With regard to "*the spirit of the thing*," (as the author *elegantly* expresses it, Appendix, p. 1,) "there is," to continue the language of Mr. C., "much that is sinful." Here, Mr. C. and I have no quarrel, for he frankly pleads guilty to the charge, and that, too, "*after time for reflection*." A man, calling himself "a minister of Jesus," (p. 11,) preaches a Sermon; prepares it for the press; is warned "that its spirit is too bitter and unsparing;" (*Ap.* p. 1,) takes "time for reflection;" (*Ap.* p. 1,) and after this "reflection," admits that "much in the spirit of the thing is sinful;" (*Ap.* p. 1,) nay, declares of this sinfulness, "*some we can see*;" (*Ap.* p. 1,) and then sends it forth among men, with all its sins upon its head. He goes further: he attempts to justify himself in this course of conduct, by assuring us that he and his brethren, (I suppose,) "*know* not what manner of spirit they are of," and then adds that "if the author withholds his testimony from Christ and his Gospel, till his own spirit is perfected in love,



he will remain dumb during this present life;" which, by the way, I think very probable, unless by some act of divine and irresistible efficiency, he can be purged from his rancorous bigotry and persecuting disposition.

What Mr. C. proposes to accomplish by sending acknowledged sin into the world, and circulating it among men under the appellation of a "Sermon," claiming to have been written by "a minister of Jesus," is more than I can imagine, unless his design be to come up to the help of the mighty against the Lord. But I dare not charge him with such a covert design, though he has broadly insinuated that Methodist clergymen are but ministers of Satan "transformed into angels of light," (p. 9.) But enough of this sort of general remark: I will take up this unique production, and remark upon it particularly.

"The occasion of the Sermon was the meeting of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of South Carolina, in the town of Cheraw. Many of the members of my congregation and Church attended their religious services, and received their preachers into their houses."—(*Preface, p. 3.*)

Presbyterian families in Cheraw, in Christian kindness, opened their houses to receive and entertain Methodist ministers, during the session of their Conference, and, in the spirit of charity and Christian fellowship, I suppose, went to hear the Gospel from the lips of Methodist preachers. This was more than Mr. C. could endure: His righteous soul was vexed by such conduct, and he must needs preach a Sermon on the occasion. This, I submit, on Mr. C's principles, was a supererogatory performance; because, on the one hand, these elected persons could not possibly be injured, for "none will be finally saved, because they were better than others, or because they have made a better use of their privileges;" (p. 29,) and *vice versa*, of course: and, on the other hand, I suppose, Mr. C. will not deny that "God from all eternity did unchangeably ordain" that these persons should go and hear the heretical Methodists preach the Arminian infidelity! And how then could they avoid it? or, why should their compliance with God's decree "grieve to the heart" this *vigilant watchman*? Surely there is a strong disposition evinced in this "Sermon" to take God's work out of his hands, and counteract his decrees with regard to the people! But I dare say if we were acquainted with the *secret will* of God, we should perceive that it was ordained from all

eternity that Mr. C. should preach and publish this *sinful* Sermon!"

"SERMON.—2 John, 10: "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

"In the context it is written, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, he hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

It is to this "*doctrine of Christ*" that the Apostle refers, when he says, "If there come any unto you, and bring not *this doctrine*." Now, as Mr. C. sets out to prove that *the doctrine of Christ and Arminianism* are opposed to each other, he should have defined clearly these two terms or phrases, and then proceeded with the proof. But so far from this, after a zigzag wandering over nearly nine pages, he tells us, it is not his "object on the present occasion to discuss the doctrine of Christ," (p. 15.) Thus did not the apostle; for it appears, (v. 6,) that the persons whom he addresses had "heard from the beginning how they ought to walk," and hence he speaks intelligibly to them when he refers to the *doctrine of Christ*; and Mr. C. himself informs us that these persons had been taught by the Apostle, (p. 7.) Mr. C.'s regular hearers may know what he intends by this phrase, but how are those to know who have never heard him, and have for the first time seen any thing from his *very lucid* pen? The failure to define this expression, which lies at the very foundation of his superstructure, is a capital defect. Indeed, Mr. C., it would seem, is not in the habit of defining terms: hence we find in the "Sermon," "the doctrine of Christ," "finished redemption," (p. 7,) "Arminianism," (p. 11,) "original sin," "personal election," &c. (p. 20,) besides many more such terms, and no attempt to define one of them, except Arminianism, which attempt is a most wilful or ignorant misrepresentation.

After quoting several admonitory Scriptures, Mr. C. adds, "They have been, and always will be necessary."—(p. 8.)

Now can Mr. C. believe that they are necessary for those who are *personally* elected and *particularly* redeemed, and whose *final* perseverance is made sure by God's unchangeable decree? Either they *can* be lost, or they *cannot* be lost: if they *cannot* be lost, the admonitions of Scripture are idle words; if they *can* be lost, Calvinian predestination is a fable. Mr. C. has his choice.



I must confess, however, that Mr. C. has just claims to our sympathy and pity; for, on his own principles, God has unalterably decreed that Mr. C's mind should be *absolutely certain* that not one of the elect can *possibly* fall of Heaven, and at the same time that the apprehension of their getting down to Hell, (or, at least, of their hearing and following "so great a stranger as Arminius;" which, of course, would lead them to perdition!) should perplex him and "grieve him to the heart!" This must be a painful result of the gigantic power and grasp of intellect by which these contrarieties are reconciled; and, I think, I can assure Mr. C. that he has the pity and sympathy of his Methodist "neighbors."

"The most signal manifestation of this spirit of anti-Christ is exhibited in the history of Popery, the man of sin."—(p. 10.)

Surely nothing can be more fatally erroneous, or soul-destroying in its influence than Methodism, according to Mr. C's portraiture."—(pp. 10, 11, and 30 to 37.)

"But even in the reformed Churches, the chronicles of true story record an incessant tendency to deny and renounce the *true doctrine of Christ*. This infidelity in principle is succeeded by manifold practical results."—(p. 10.)

Many of these results, in the author's judgment, are pointed out, but no denomination specified, till he is closing the category, when, with the dignity which is so characteristic of a truly magnanimous and noble mind, he condescends to point out especially the infidel Methodists! Hear him:

"Then again great effects flow from the monarchical institutions, the trained bands, the military drill, the systematic and concentrated action, and the '*esprit du corps*' of the followers of Wesley."—(p. 11.)

Mark the design and subtlety manifested here. The author sets out by assuming "that there *is now* in the Church a spirit of anti-Christ, which is exhibited by the promulgation of principles and practices opposed to, and subversive of the *true doctrine of Christ*."—(p. 10.)

After going, "hop, skip and jump," more than half way down the same page, he sets down this remarkable sentence—remarkable because of its connexion: "This infidelity in principle is succeeded by manifold practical results."

Now, gentle reader, skip away again with this artful writer, till

you reach the eighth line of *p.* 11, and there, as one of these “manifold results” of “infidelity,” you meet with this account: “Then again great effects flow,” &c., as quoted already.

The design—the effort here, seems to be, to fix upon Methodists the charge of “infidelity in principle;” though in so covert and stealthy a manner that the calumniator shall go unobserved; like a certain shell-animal which usually peragrates in the *night season*, marking with its slime the surface over which it has passed, thus defacing, with but little probability of its being identified. But to make this matter clear, I will place in immediate succession these leading points of this part of the “Sermon.” When so placed, they read thus:—

“There *is now* in the Church a spirit of *anti-Christ*, which is exhibited by the promulgation of principles and practices, opposed to, and subversive of the true doctrine of Christ.”

“This infidelity in principle is succeeded by manifold practical results.”

“Great effects flow from the monarchical institutions, &c. of the followers of Wesley.”

Mark the emphatic present tense in the first of the three sentences, and the “principles and practices” by which “*anti-Christ* is exhibited.” Then observe the “infidelity in principle,” and the “practical results” mentioned in the second sentence. And, finally, the “great effects” of the Methodism of “the followers of Wesley,” brought forward, as one of the results of the great agent, “infidelity in principle.” How close the connexion preserved in the design, though the parts are so distant from each other, upon the face of the performance! But it is out, and the Methodists as a body are charged with infidelity, and that, too, by a man calling himself “a minister of Jesus.” Mr. Coit, with the indignant feelings of conscious innocence, we spurn the foul imputation, pleading not guilty, and challenge the proof! and this, I am sure, is the only answer which public sentiment will demand to such base calumny.

How pleasing the reflection here, that Mr. C. is only “*the accuser of the brethren*,” and not judge! and how joyfully do we commit our cause to “God, the Judge of all!”

After the foregoing, if there be any thing in the following which surprises, it is its mildness:—

“I testify, Arminianism, which the Methodists in this country are

universally understood to preach, is a system of anti-Christ.”—(p. 11.)

When Mr. C. condescends to let us know what he means by “Arminianism, which the Methodists preach,” we may perhaps answer him. Until then, we esteem the allegation as harmless as the humming of the beetle on a summer evening.

With what Mr. C. says, (pp. 12, 13,) of the “hypocritical charity of the Presbyterian Church;” her tolerating “heterogeneous and discordant principles;” “her ambition to multiply her numbers and wealth;” &c. &c., her being “fed with the pap of Hopkinsian disinterested affections;” and “soaring aloft, and hovering over the crater of universal salvation;” &c. &c., and her being “in the midst of Babylon,” and the Lord turning her “captivity,” I have nothing to do. These things may be true, or they may be false, for aught I *know*; but I question not the word of the author, and congratulate him on the deliverance of his beloved “Presbyterian Church;” and I most sincerely hope that her “glorious confession and catechism,” having passed through these awful scenes, will continue to send forth their very *luminous light* and *veritable truth*, till every corner of “the green earth” shall know what Calvinists believe! And if all Calvinistic divines were as ingenuous as Mr. C. in declaring their sentiments, this “consummation, devoutly to be wished,” would be greatly furthered.

“There are short summaries of this *doctrine* in Scripture.”—(p. 14.)

I was glad to meet with this remark, and looked for light that should rest upon the term, but the summaries given are such as all professing Christians believe, and so there is no ground of difference here. The following may serve as an example: “Whosoever confesseth that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.” This is (if Mr. C. will allow the expression,) common ground among Christians, and, therefore, there can be no debate; but on the 15th page I find that it is not Mr. C’s “intention to discuss the doctrine of Christ,” and so we are in the dark as to his meaning. On p. 14 he says, “In our text the Apostle assumes that the persons to whom he writes do understand the *doctrine* of Christ.” But I am sure we cannot understand what Mr. C. means by it, unless he will explain himself. To refer us to the Scriptures, does not help the matter, for we too profess to believe the Scriptures, and if he will

give us a definition of "the doctrine of Christ," in Scriptural language, *in its plain meaning and connexion*, we promise to be at his side heartily on this foundation.

"As neighbors, you ought to love, do good, and be hospitable to all men; but it is sinful to do any thing whereby you seem to endorse false teachers of religion, to approve of their doctrines, or to favor their principles."—(p. 16.)

In the following ways, according to Mr. C., his elect people may "endorse false teachers," &c., viz:—"To hear and follow the voice of so great a stranger as Arminius,"—i. e. plainly, Methodist preachers. Again: "It is taught in Scripture that the enemy will sometimes come in like a flood, and some of you, my hearers, have lately left the ark, and gone over the waste of strange waters, and like the dove you have returned, having found no rest for the sole of your foot. You bring no olive leaf plucked from the dreary desolation: and must abide till the waters of that deluge subside, before you can find rest for your souls."—(p. 17.)

Is the reader at a loss to understand this figurative language? Turn to the beginning of the preface and read, "The occasion of the following Sermon," &c. "Many of the members of my congregation and Church attended their [Methodists,] religious services, and received their preachers into their houses."—"The enemy comes in like a flood."—The whole S. C. Conference of the Methodist E. Church comes into Cheraw: "Some of you, my hearers, have left the ark"—have gone from the Presbyterian Church, and beyond the reach of my instructions: "You have gone over the waste of strange waters"—Listened to the voice of so great a stranger as Arminius; heard the infidel "circuit riders!" (p. 38.) "Like the dove you have returned"—To my teaching; to this ark: "Having found no rest," &c.—No absolute, unconditional election on which to prop yourselves: "You bring no olive leaf"—no indication of peace and quiet: "From that *dreary desolation*"—The soulless men who compose the Conference, and whose "principles and practices" are "opposed to, and subversive of, the doctrine of Christ," whether, as you "attended their religious services," or received them "into your houses." If this be not a fair comment, I will thank any one who will correct me, in the light of Mr. C's pamphlet.

Once more, not to multiply quotations:—"And now in conclusion,



my beloved hearers, as you ought not to receive into your houses, and acknowledge as true ministers, any who bring not the *doctrine of Christ*, so you ought not to go into the houses of any who *abide not in this doctrine.*”—(pp. 45, 46.)

“Doubtless, the elect lady and her children, to whom this epistle was addressed, by obedience to its precepts might have subjected themselves among their neighbors to the charge of bigotry, fanaticism and monomania.”—(p. 16.)

Who can doubt it, if Mr. C. preach as St. John intended? Let this course be adopted by Presbyterians, and they will become “a gazing stock” indeed.—(p. 16.)

How fully Mr. C. exhibits here the spirit which actuated the Disciples, before they knew the way of the Lord perfectly, and which Jesus rebuked:—“Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said, Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us.” But Mr. C. does not admit what is here admitted, but, regarding us as perfect infidels, spurns us from him.

“It would appear that my labor has been in vain in teaching you the knowledge of the fundamental truths of the religion of Jesus.”—(p. 16.)

Is it possible that the Presbyterian Church in Cheraw did not *know* “the fundamental truths of the religion of Jesus” before Mr. C. became her Pastor? But we may not doubt it: Mr. C., by plain and easy implication, bears testimony to that effect. Our Presbyterian “neighbors,” (as he would have us say,) cannot be offended at this being noticed, for it is their own oracular Mr. C. who thus testifies. And only think, he has been laboring for *three years*, more or less, to teach them this “knowledge,” yet his “labor has been in vain!”

“Let God be true, and every man a liar.”—(p. 17.)

To this Scriptural sentiment, we respond a hearty Amen!

“It is no part of my principles to keep my people in the dark; but I have always urged the duty upon you of a thorough inquiry, and candid investigation of your faith and doctrine, *each one for himself.*”—(p. 17.)

That is, by reading the Scriptures, and then taking my explanations and glosses, and those of Calvinistic writers; but, at your peril, don’t go to hear the infidel Methodists, or look into the writings of



those who "follow so great a stranger as Arminius." This is the spirit of Mr. C's performance, and, in his estimation, may be a very "thorough inquiry, and candid investigation," but it is submitted to the common sense of men that it is an exceedingly *ex parte* examination.

My attention is next arrested by a long paragraph, commencing on the 17th p., and running nearly to the foot of p. 18, and which, were it not for respect to its author, I would term a complete *rigmarole*; but as Mr. C. has written it, I will touch a point or two.

"What madness of infatuation is it for us to judge of the genuineness of a Christian profession, by human criteria at a time when a man's religion is determined, not by his faith and principles," &c. "but by the length of his face, the length of his tongue, the length of his legs, the length of his arm, and the length of his purse."

Truly, if these be the criteria in religious concerns among the people with whom Mr. C. labors, I don't wonder that he fears his "labor has been in vain;" and though his congregation may regard them as criteria in such matters, I think he may rest assured they are not so esteemed any where else.

"All our thoughts, sensibilities, and convictions in relation to good and evil, are false and fatal."—(p. 18.)

So, if a man *think* or have a *conviction* on his mind, that it would be "evil" to murder his fellow, that thought or conviction is "false and fatal." Or, if his *thought*, or *feeling*, or *conviction*, lead him to the closet of prayer, or to the house of God, or to relieve distress, it is still "false and fatal." Hence, adds Mr. C., "It is the official work of the Holy Ghost to convince us of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." To this we fully assent; but may not the Holy Ghost in his "official work" produce in man these very "thoughts, sensibilities and convictions," which Mr. C. so unequivocally pronounces "false and fatal?"

From p. 18 to p. 26, Mr. C. endeavors to trace what he calls Arminianism, from the days of John the Baptist till the present time; and truly he has made out his point to a demonstration.

First, he tells us that the Scribes and Pharisees in the days of John and of our Saviour, were Pelagians; then that the early Christian fathers "testify to the doctrine of the grace of Christ." In the fourth century, he next informs us, Pelagius arose, denying the doctrine of

original sin; and then he skips to Arminius, "some forty or fifty years after the Council of Trent," *assuming* that he, too, taught Pelagianism, and at a single spring jumps to the conclusion that Methodists are worse than all that have gone before: these were but Deists; those are Atheists. If Mr. C's "congregation and Church" be so gullish as to swallow "such stuff" for sound, logical argument, let them do so; but I am sure those who dare to leave Mr. C's "ark," and have the temerity to examine both sides of a subject in debate, will not need to have the utter fallacy of this effort of our author pointed out. But to be a little particular:—

"I now propose to give you a hasty glance at the history and doctrines of what is now called Arminianism."—(p. 18.)

I was pleased to meet with this proposal, but on reading on was disappointed in expecting a definition of Arminianism, and disgusted with the unfair, illogical, and dogmatic course adopted by the author.

Mr. C. tells us (p. 19,) that the Jews, Pharisees and Scribes, the legalists, self-righteous, and the hypocrites, were Arminians! This we receive as *information*, and would feel our great obligation to our informant! though we frankly confess, a sight of the proof on which this assertion rests, would oblige us much more.

After talking about the Gospel being charged with Antinomianism, and "the doctrines of grace," and "the primitive fathers," and "splendid temples," and "mausoleums of the dead," and "the magicians of Egypt," and "the tenants of the pyramids," with much more of undefined terms, and far-fetched and poorly-applied imagery, we are told that about the fourth century "Pelagius distinguished himself" among the heretics, denying, particularly, the doctrine of *original sin*; that he was successfully opposed by Augustine; that from the fourth "century there were partial convulsions, but no general revolution," until Luther, "by eating these aliments of spiritual life, and drinking the water from this fountain," was animated to commence and prosecute "the great Reformation from Popery," and that "Calvin was such a distinguished defender of the Pauline system of faith, that it has from his day generally been called from his name, to discriminate the true doctrines of the Reformation from those of Popery and all other systems."

How well told on Mr. C's side! "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his *neighbor* cometh and searcheth him," said the wise man.

"The principles of the Christian faith, as stated and explained by Calvin, received the concurrence of all the reformed Churches on the Continent, the German, Bohemian, Belgic and French; and also of the Churches of Scotland and England."—(*p. 22.*)

So says Mr. Coit: turn we to authorities.

"In opposition to opinions (i. e. of the Romish Church) so repugnant in many respects to reason, and in almost all so subversive of Scripture, the Lutherans constantly pressed the unsophisticated tenet of the atonement; not contractedly, in a Calvinistical, but comprehensively, in a Christian point of view,—in one in which both Calvinists and Arminians alike embrace it."—(Abp. Laurence, as quoted by Watson, B. & T. Diet., Art., Lutherans.)

The same writer, after stating the views of Erasmus, remarks, "Congenial with [him] were those of Luther: 'To acquire any knowledge, (he remarked,) of a Deity not revealed in Scripture, to know what his existence is, his actions or dispositions, belongs not to me. My duty is only this, to know what are his promises, his precepts, and his threatenings. Pernicious and pestilent is the wish to philosophize upon predestination.' How differently Calvin felt upon the same subject, and with what little reserve, rather with what bold temerity, he labored to scrutinize the unrevealed Divinity, is too well known to require any thing beyond a bare allusion to the circumstance. His sentiments, however, were much less regarded than some are disposed to allow; and upon this particular question, so far were they from having attained their full celebrity at the period when the Articles of the Church of England were framed, that they were not taught without opposition, even in his own unimportant territory of Geneva. For at that precise era, he was publicly accused (by S. Castillio) of making God the author of sin; and although, (not contented with silencing him,) he first imprisoned and afterward banished his accuser, yet he could not expel the opinions of his adversary."—(*Ibid.*)

"Persuaded of his [God's] good will toward all men,—they [the Lutherans] imputed to him nothing like a practical choice, no limitation of favors, no irrespective exclusion of persons, but assuming the Christian character as the sole ground of individual preference, they believed that every baptized infant, by being made a member of Christ, not by being comprised in a previous, arbitrary decree, is tru-

ly the elect of God; that he who in maturer years becomes polluted by wilful crime, loses that state of salvation which before he possessed; that, nevertheless, by true repentance and conversion to the Father of mercy, he is again reinstated in it; and that, by finally persevering in it, he at length receives the kingdom prepared for every sincere Christian before the foundation of the world. Can any man whom prejudice has not blinded, rank these sentiments with those of Calvin? It may seem almost unnecessary to add, that the Lutherans held the defectibility of grace; its indefectibility being a position supported but by those who think that the Redeemer died for a selected few alone.”—(*Ibid.*)

“They maintained that we are admitted into that number, [the elect] or discarded from it in the eye of Heaven, proportionably as we embrace or reject the salvation offered to all; embracing it with a faith inseparable from genuine virtue, or rejecting it by incredulity and crime.”—(*Ibid.*)

Luther and Melancthon at first were nearly as great fatalists as ever Calvin was afterward, but a controversy between the former “and Erasmus, on Free Will, produced a great amelioration of the doctrinal system of the Lutheran Church.”

Luther, in the preface to the first volume of his works—1545—speaks highly of the writings and character of Melancthon, his able coadjutor in the Reformation. Let us see, then, what Melancthon taught:—

“That Melancthon not only abandoned, but reprehended the doctrine [of fatality, necessity, or absolute, unconditional decrees, for they are all the same,] in 1529, we cannot doubt, because his own express testimony in proof of it remains on record.” The author then introduces the “proof” from a letter and a tract written by Melancthon himself.—(*Ibid.*)

“From the *Loci Theologici*, in which Melancthon had first introduced this tenet, he expunged *necessity* in the edition of 1533, and inserted in its place the opposite one of *contingency*.” After giving some extracts from the work in support of this position, the author adds, “These extracts serve to prove that Melancthon reprobated the idea of introducing into the Church the doctrine of stoical fate, before Calvin had distinguished himself either as an author or a reformer.”

(*Ibid.*)



"The Almighty," the Lutherans said, "has seriously willed and decreed, from eternity all men to be saved; let us not restrain the general promise, in which he offers his favor to all without discrimination, nor confine it to those who, affecting a peculiar garb, wish to be alone esteemed pious and sanctified. If many perish, the fault is not to be imputed to the Divine will, but to human obstinacy, which despises that will, and disregards a salvation destined for all men." If God chose certain persons in order to unite them to himself, (they argued) and rejected the remainder in all respects alike, would not such AN ELECTION WITHOUT CAUSES seem tyrannical? Let us therefore be persuaded that some cause exists in us, as some difference is to be found between those who are, and those who are not, accepted." "He (they stated) who falls from grace, cannot but perish," &c.

(*Wat. B. & T. Dict., Art., Calv.*)

*tious* "Melancthon, who termed Calvin the \*Zeno of his day, says, "Let us execrate the stoical dispensations which some introduce, who imagine that the elect always retain the Holy Spirit, even when they commit atrocious crimes,—a manifest and highly reprehensible error; and let us not confirm in fools security and blindness."

(*Wat. B. & T. Dict., Art., Calv.*)

The Reformation commenced in 1517; in 1529 Melancthon discarded the tenet of *necessity* and its kindred doctrines, and embraced and taught their opposites, Luther approving of him and his writings; "in 1552 Calvin's first tract on predestination was published," and in 1558 his "Institutes" appeared; so that for some thirty-two years Calvinian decrees were almost (perhaps I might say entirely) unknown in the Reformed Church.—(*See Ency. of R. Know. Art. Ref.—Wat. B. & T. Dict., Art., Calv. and Armin.*)

Mr. Buck says that Calvinism "has been the prevailing religion in the United Provinces ever since 1571," but pretends to no higher claim. (*See his Dict., Art. Calv.*) But Mr. Coit, no doubt, was better informed, for he says that it was the dogmas which Calvin taught that animated and strengthened Luther and his contemporaries, (p. 21;) and that the same dogmas received the concurrence of all the Reformed Churches, (p. 22.) These, however, are Mr. C's *unsupported assertions*; that with which I have met them is *matter of historic record*, and, were it necessary, the proof might be extended.

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\* Zeno was the founder of the sect of the stoics, who taught that all things are subject to a stern, irresistible fatality.



After the quotations from Lutheran writers, given above, Mr. Watson adds, "These quotations might be augmented by others, from the earliest Lutheran authors, more Arminian in their import than any which Arminians ever wrote; but the preceding are sufficient to show that, during upward of thirty years, the Protestant Church in Germany was nourished by doctrines most manifestly at variance with the refinements afterward promulgated by Calvin. Real conversions of sinners were never more abundant than in that golden age, yet these were produced by the blessing of God upon an evangelical agency that had scarcely any thing in common with the Genevan dogmas. With these and similar facts before him, therefore, no Calvinist can, in common honesty, claim for the peculiarities of his creed—for those doctrines which distinguish it from the Melancthonism of the Protestant Churches of England and Germany—the exclusive title of EVANGELICAL."—(*B. & T. Dict., Art., Calv.*)

"But when Calvin's *statements* and *explanations* of the Christian faith were published, they were adopted by the Reformed Church of Germany," may be what Mr. C. intends.

And why then in 1618—seventy years after Calvin had published his Institutes—was it deemed needful by the Calvinists, to assemble in the celebrated Synod of Dort, for the purpose of putting down Arminianism? Favoring the despotic views of Prince Maurice, and thus having the civil power on their side, why did they suspend or entirely depose many Arminian ministers from their office, and cite the remainder, as culprits, to appear before the Synod? Why did they take care that the Synod should be composed of Calvinists? Why did they refuse to argue openly the questions in point? Why did they turn the Arminian divines out of doors, and condemn them to expatriation, &c. on pain of death if they refused, and their doctrines as heretical, without allowing them to answer or defend themselves? The answer is easy;—Arminianism existed extensively in the Church, and was spreading, and that Calvinism might live, must be put down. (*See Cald. Mem. of Epis., ch. 8-12; Buck's Dict., Art., Armin.; Wat. Dict., Art. Armin. & Calv.*) The truth is, the Church was not Calvinistic; a part of it was, and part still held Luther's and Melancthon's teachings, with the amplifications of Arminius.

Mr. C. says, (*p. 22.*) "The Christian faith, as stated and explained by Calvin, received the concurrence of the Churches of Scotland and England." We doubt as to the latter:—

The Articles of the Church of England were drawn up first "by Abp. Crannier, assisted by Bp. Ridley, in the year 1551, and after being corrected by the other bishops, and approved by the convocation, they were published in 1553, and amounted to forty-two in number. In 1562 they were revised and corrected, being then reduced to thirty-nine."—(*Wat. B. & T. Dict., Art. Ch. of Eng.*)

"These Articles were founded for the most part upon a body of Articles compiled and published in the reign of Edw. VI."

(*Ency. of R. Know., Art. Ch. of Eng.*)

Edw. VI. reigned from 1547 to 1554, (Goldsmith's Eng.) and so, taking both authorities together, we learn that the Articles of the Church of England were drawn up before Calvin had published his first tract on Predestination in 1552, and they were published in England five years before Calvin's Institutes appeared in Germany. Yet Mr. C. asserts, that the Church of England *concurred* in Calvin's statements and explanations of the Christian faith! Believe him who can!

"But when the Articles "were revised and corrected" in 1562, four years after the publication of Calvin's Institutes, his views were incorporated in them."

In answer to this *supposition*, I quote from Mr. Watson. After the quotation above, closing with the word "*evangelical*," he adds, "Equally fallacious is the ground on which he can prefer any such claim on account of the alleged counsel and advice given by Calvin to our Reformers, while they were engaged in the formation of our Articles and Liturgy. On no fact in the ecclesiastical history of this country are our annalists more completely at agreement than on this, —that Calvin's name and writings were scarcely known in England till the time when the persecution under Queen Mary (who succeeded Edw. VI.) forced many of our best divines into banishment; and that, to the great future disquietude of the Church, several of these exiles on their return, imported a personal bias with them in favor of his discipline or his dogmas. Anterior to that period, he had received no such pressing invitations from our Reformers and from the king himself, as Melancthon had for his friendly theological aid, in drawing up the doctrinal and disciplinary formulæ of our national Church. The man who asserts the contrary to this, and who has the hardihood to deny the Melancthonian origin of the Articles and Litur-

gy, discovers at once his want of correct information on these subjects, and has never read the convincing documents appended to the Abp. of Cashel's Eight Sermons, being the Bampton Lectures for 1804." The accomplished author refers also to other works.

"From the time of Augustine to the Council of Trent, our doctrine was considered orthodox by Rome, though the Christian fathers contemporary with Augustine and those who followed, bear a double testimony; some confessing his doctrine to be the true antient faith, and some contradicting and blaspheming."—(p. 22.)

If the several parts of this extract be consistent with each other, I confess I have not the ability to understand language. First, the author tells us that *his* "doctrine was considered orthodox by Rome from the time of Augustine to the Council of Trent," and in the same breath says,—"The Christian fathers contemporary with Augustine and those who followed, bear a double testimony; some confessing his doctrine to be the true antient faith, and some contradicting and blaspheming." Now, if some only received it, and some did not, how can it be said that "Rome" (i. e. the Church,) "considered it orthodox?" And to make this paradox still more irreconcilable, he immediately adds, "The faithful defenders of these principles have been as few and far between in the Church as such good men as David, Josiah and Hezekiah in the chronicles of the kings of Judah and Israel." And yet the Church received the doctrine as orthodox! —That is to say, the defenders of this doctrine of Mr. C. in the period "from Augustine to the Council of Trent" were "few and far between," while the mass of the Church "contradicted and blasphemed," which is proof in Mr. C's estimation that the doctrine was received by the Church! Further on, on the same page, he remarks: "The fact is, the Church from the beginning was always stiff-necked, self-willed, and fatally bent on her own thoughts, imaginations and stubborn ways; prone to backsliding, unbelief and abominable idolatries:" and yet this is the Church which received as orthodox that system of fatalism taught by Calvin, and which Mr. C. calls "*our doctrine*." Now, according to Mr. C's own showing, either his doctrine has no principle in it which can deliver man from "unbelief and abominable idolatries," &c., or the Church from the beginning did not receive Mr. C's Calvinian dogmas. Mr. C. may hang on either horn.

Again: Did any one, until Mr. C. became an author, ever hear of

*Christians*—"Christian fathers"—"contradicting and blaspheming?" But perhaps he means that they contradicted the system of fatality taught by Augustine, about 392, and afterward by Calvin in 1558, and now by Mr. Coit in 1839! In this he is correct; but he will find it difficult to make people who *think* for themselves believe that a man *blasphemes*, because he cannot swallow the absurdities and monstrosities of Calvinism.

Mr. C. takes special care to say nothing of those who preceded Augustine, for the truth is, they neither received *his* "doctrine as orthodox," nor bore "a double testimony." Mr. Watson says, "On one topic Calvin and the older divines of that school were very explicit. They tell us plainly that they found all the Christian fathers, both of the Greek and the Latin Church, down to the age of St. Augustine, quite unmanageable for their purpose, and therefore occasionally bestow upon them and their productions epithets not the most courteous. Yet some modern writers, not possessing half the splendid qualifications of those veterans in learning, make a gorgeous display of the little that they know concerning antiquity, and wish to lead their readers to suppose that the whole stream of early Christianity has flowed down only in their channel."

(*Wat. Dict., Art., Calv.*)

"He [Arminius] introduced substantially the old Pelagian or Semi-Pelagian philosophy."—(*p. 23.*)

Simple denial, I know, is the usual way of meeting bold assertion, but I will introduce a part of the reply of the Dutch Arminians to the Synod of Dort, when the same charge was made against them,—not for Mr. C's sake, for he either is informed, or has the means of information at hand, but to show those who have not leisure to examine for themselves, how much they may depend on his assertions:—"In their concluding observations they say, 'From all these remarks a judgment may easily be formed at what an immense distance our sentiments stand from the dogmatical assertions of the Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians, on the grace of God in the conversion of man. Pelagius, in the first instance, attributed all things to nature; but we acknowledge nothing but grace. When Pelagius was blamed for not acknowledging grace, he began indeed to speak of it, but it is evident that by grace he understood the power of nature, as created by God, that is, the rational will; but by grace we understand a supernatural



gift. Pelagius, when afterward pressed with passages of Scripture, also admitted this supernatural grace, but he placed it solely in the external teaching of the law; though we affirm that God offers his word to men, yet we likewise affirm that he inwardly causes the understanding to believe. Subsequently Pelagius joined to this external grace that by which sins are pardoned; we acknowledge not only the grace by which sins are forgiven, but also that by which men are assisted to refrain from the commission of sin. In addition to his previous concessions, Pelagius granted that the grace of Christ was requisite beside the two kinds which he had enumerated, but he attributed it entirely to the doctrine and example of Christ, that we are aided in our endeavors not to commit sin; we likewise admit that the doctrine and example of Christ afford us some aid in refraining from sin, but in addition to their influence, we also place the gift of the Holy Spirit with which God endues us, and which enlightens our understandings and confers strength and power upon our will to abstain from sinning. When Pelagius afterward owned the assistance of divine power, inwardly working in man by the Holy Spirit, he placed it solely in the enlightening of the understanding; but we believe that it is not only necessary for us to know or understand what we ought to do, but that it is also requisite for us to implore the aid of the Holy Spirit that we may be rendered capable of performing, and may delight in the performance of that which it is our duty to do. Pelagius admitted grace, but it has been a question with some whether he meant only illumination, or beside this, a power communicated to the will; he admitted grace, but he did this only to show that by means of it man can with greater ease act aright; we, on the contrary, affirm that grace is bestowed, not that we may be able with greater ease to act aright, (which is, as though we can do this even without grace,) but that grace is absolutely necessary to enable us to act at all aright. Pelagius asserted that man, so far from requiring the aid of grace, for the performance of good actions, is through the powers implanted in him at the time of his creation, capable of fulfilling the whole law, of loving God, and of overcoming all temptations: we on the contrary assert, the grace of God is required for the performance of every act of piety. Pelagius declared that by the works of nature man renders himself worthy of grace; but we in common with the Church universal condemn this dogma. When Pelagius afterward himself con-



denmed this tenet, he understood by grace partly natural grace, which is antecedent to all merit, and partly remission of sins which he acknowledged to be gratuitous; but he added, that through works performed by the powers of nature alone, at least through the desire of good and the imperfect longing after it, men merit that spiritual grace by which they are assisted in good works; but we declare that men will that which is good on account of God's prevenience, or going before them by his grace, and exciting within them a longing after good; otherwise grace would no longer be grace, because it would not be gratuitously bestowed, but only on account of the merit of man.'''—(*Ency. of R. Know., Art., Pela.*)

"The original Arminians were in truth as far from Pelagian or Semi-Pelagian errors, granting the opinions of Pelagius to be fairly reported by his adversaries, as Calvinists themselves. This is also the case with the whole body of Wesleyan Methodists, and with the cognate societies to which they have given rise both in Europe and America."—(*Wat. B. & T. Dict., Art. Pela.*)

But these declarations of the original Arminians themselves, so plain that none can misapprehend them, and the declarations of Wesleyan Methodists, both in Europe and this country, that they embrace similar views, are to be puffed away, Mr. C. seems to think, by the breath of his dogmatical and unsupported affirmations. If Mr. C. have closed his eyes to plain truth and sound words in this matter, surely it is worse than unfair to attempt the deception of others by bearing false witness against his neighbor.

"Some of the English martyrs confirmed their testimony at the stake, under bloody Mary, rather than deny the faith, and avow the Arminian or Popish doctrines."—(*p. 23.*)

Pray inform us, Mr. C., which of the "English martyrs" were required to "avow the Arminian doctrines?" Abp. Cranmer and Bp. Ridley suffered martyrdom in that reign, and they drew up the Articles of the Church of England, which Abp. Lawrence and Mr. Watson declare are not Calvinistic, though Mr. C. affirms that they are, but on which side is the right of authority, and good sense, and sound judgment, is submitted to the reader; so that here were two Arminians, (or more properly Melancthonians,) if no more, who suffered to the death for their tenets.

But if Mr. C. will turn to the last paragraph on the 17th page of

his own "Sermon," and to the 2d page of the Appendix thereto, he will perhaps blush at his inconsistency in mentioning these martyrdoms as proofs or indications of Christianity; unless, indeed, he can excuse himself on the ground that "God from all eternity did ordain whatsoever comes to pass," and, of course, that he should be thus inconsistent!

But perhaps he will find it more difficult to exculpate himself of the evident malevolence which would couple "Arminian" and "Popish doctrines," as though they were one, or, at least, equally destructive to the soul's best interests; and the spirit which prompted such base inuendo surely can form no part of the character of "a minister of Jesus!"

On p. 24, Mr. C. alludes to "the persecutions of Arminian Episcopacy:" and I believe what he says just as firmly as I believe what he has written about the infidelity of Methodism, (*See pp. 10, 11.*) Did any one ever before hear of Arminians persecuting their fellow men on account of religious sentiments? The thing is impossible while they maintain their Arminian principles; and before Mr. C. can expect credence to his assertion, he must bring forward strong proof, 1st, That those of whom he speaks were Arminians, and 2dly, That they did persecute.

Arminians, according to Mr. C's definition, may persecute, no doubt; but where he found his definition of Arminianism, I cannot imagine, unless he conjured it up in his own heated brain to serve his purpose against the Methodists. I cannot forbear introducing here part of a note found on p. 26 of Mr. C's book—"I have seen it somewhere mentioned of the elder Cato, that he concluded all his speeches in the Roman Senate, whatever might be the subject of debate, with the humane sentence—"*It is my opinion also that Carthage ought to be destroyed.*" I am sure the reader of Mr. C's "Sermon" will not need spectacles to perceive that *his* very humane opinion is, that the Methodist Episcopal Church "ought to be destroyed;" and that he would not be very nice in the choice of the weapons to be employed, so the object be attained! My heart is very thankful, at any rate, that neither we nor our doctrines are committed to Mr. C's *Calvinian* "tender mercies!"

"It seems to be the impression of some that modern Methodists are not so unsound in the faith as old Arminians, but I fear the truth

would tell the opposite tendency; *proficere in pejus*—worse and worse, is the waxing of error.”—(p. 25.)

Mr. C. can make “old Arminians” any thing to suit his purpose—infidels, Pelagians, Papists; but yet “modern Methodists” are “worse” than they. Really, Mr. Coit! Don’t you fear that you’ll scare the people away from us, by making them think that we are devils incarnate by this time!! Fie, fie! And we are getting “*worse and worse!*” After such a *decision* from this “oracle of the doctrine of Christ,” surely no one will venture within arms-length of our Churches again, even though he had an arm as long as Mr. C. himself might wish, by which to *determine* his religion!—(See p. 17.)

To the above very charitable effusion, Mr. C. has subjoined the following, in the form of a note,—“From Arminius to Adam Clarke, L. L. D., F. S. M., M. R. I. A., there is a lapse from Deistic to Atheistic.”\*

Arminius a Deist! Adam Clarke an Atheist! Well done! Mr. Coit. Now, reader, this is the same gentleman who presently will tell you, (See p. 37,) that he does not judge men; yet here he names two men, “whose praise is in all the Churches,” who were, in their day, “chief men among the brethren,” and who, “being dead, yet speak,” and pronounces (but don’t suppose he is *judging* now,—he is only *pronouncing sentence*,) that the one is a Deist and the other an Atheist! Mr. C., please turn to the word “*Envy*,” in Walker’s Dictionary, and commit the definition; and just suffer me to add, that Arminius will be a light in the Church, and Adam Clarke will be appealed to as authority, when the name of John C. Coit has faded in oblivion even in his own limited “congregation and Church,” beyond the circumscribed boundary of which it must be forever unknown! Adam Clarke an Atheist! If you have gulled your “congregation and Church” into a belief of that, Mr. C., I don’t wonder that they are able to gulp your beloved Calvinism with all its absurdities and contradictions.

“When they [the Methodists] had separated from that Church [of

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\* Why did Mr. C. add the initials of as many of Dr. Clarke’s theological and literary honors as he had met with? Evidently, it would seem, to hide his own insignificance under covert of a pitiful, sickly attempt at burlesque; while under the same veil he emits spleen and envy. It reminds one strongly of the vain attempts of an English archer to penetrate a coat of mail of French workmanship in the days of “*Cœur de Lion*,” all which resulted in shivered arrows or battered points.



England] and were at liberty to adopt their own standard of doctrine, they omitted in their Confession, fourteen of the thirty-nine Articles of that Church. Upon an examination of those rejected, it will be manifest, that they wished to be untrammelled by the restraints of orthodoxy, ~~or~~ to be upon the open field of Arminianism.”—(p. 25, *i. e. heterodoxy, at least, according to Mr. C.*) *and*

I suppose, if they had retained the 17th Article and discarded the 31st, Mr. C. would have found no fault.

“Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby he hath constantly decreed to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation,” &c.

The above is the point and marrow, as to predestination, of the celebrated 17th Article of the Church of England; and it will be a task to which even Mr. C. will find himself inadequate without torturing the sense, to show from that Article upon what ground this “predestination to life” proceeds,—whether upon the Calvinian ground of arbitrary, unconditional will, or on the Arminian ground of foreseen faith in man.

Every work should be allowed to interpret itself if possible. Turn we, then, to the 20th Article—“Neither may it [the Church] so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another.”

Certainly, then, the men who framed these Articles would not have us so to expound or understand one part of them as to be repugnant to another part. Let us now turn to the 31st Article.

“The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual,” &c.

Taking these words in their plain, legitimate meaning, I defy any man to reconcile them to the Calvinistic view of predestination, and consequently, (according to the principle involved in the 20th Article, above,) the Calvinistic gloss put upon the 17th Article, is entirely gratuitous.

If we now turn to the 11th Article, we will find the key-stone of this arch,—“We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith,” &c. So, then, the plain meaning of the Articles, taken together, is this,—that Christ died for all; that some are elected in him; and that this election is by

faith—faith foreknown by God, and not by a previous irresistible, unreasonable, and unconditional decree, as Calvin taught.

“Why, then, have not the Methodists adopted the 17th Article?”

Simply to save ourselves the trouble and time of an explanation to every *uninformed person* whom we meet: and besides, we think the 17th Article unnecessary, where the 11th and 31st are retained.

Collation of parts, whether in Scripture or other writings, is an important work; but when Mr. C. writes to support Calvinism, proper, such work does not serve his purpose, but snatching up a passage here, and another there, which seem to favor his system, and frequently taken out of their proper connexion, he saddles them with stern, all-controlling fate, and throwing his beloved Calvinism astride it, sends forth this phantom of his imagination, with the reins committed to the control of a sinful spirit,—(*see App.*)—to spend its ephemeral life in illuminating the minds of men! We Methodists, however, pray to be delivered from such *Egyptian illumination*, much preferring the light of the land of Goshen.

What Mr. C. insinuates in what he says of the half of the Article on Original Sin, being omitted by the Methodists, will vanish on comparing the 9th Article of the Church of England with the 7th Article of the Methodist E. Church, by which it will appear that we retain the doctrine, entire, of the original Article, having omitted only the amplification of it found there. This is another instance of Mr. C's malevolence, which would insinuate that our Article on Original Sin is Pelagian in its character, and which stops at no means, however vile, to bring upon us, as a Church, public odium and distrust.

True, Mr. C. informs us that “the great Lord Chatham once remarked that the Church of England had Calvinistic Articles;” but the authority of Lord Chatham, (however great otherwise,) and that of Mr. Coit, *in such matters*, are, I presume, about equal, and how well-grounded and binding is that of the latter appears from the foregoing.

“Let it not be imagined for a moment that we oppose Methodists, because we suppose we are better or more righteous than they; but because *their Saviour* is utterly inadequate and insufficient for such great sinners as we are.”—(*p. 26.*) “We Presbyterians are such desperate sinners, that we must have more than a universal Saviour,



a universal atonement, or a universal or common grace, or we shall certainly and finally be lost. We have an infinitely better Saviour than the Methodists preach;\* their's is insufficient for us."—(p. 29.)

What masterly efforts to be ironically caustic! I am prepared for any thing of this sort from Mr. C., but how an assembly of Christians could listen to "such stuff," (to adopt one of the author's elegant expressions, p. 43,) and then request its reverend author to publish it, (as we learn from the title page,) is more than I can imagine. Had the Methodists of Cheraw injured, in any way, the Presbyterian Church, I could see some ground in human nature, aside of grace, for such a course, but to request the publication of so wanton, libellous, insulting and unprovoked an attack upon Methodists, is surely a little strange, and a good man would hardly choose to attempt accounting for it.

"Arminians say there is a great and impassable gulf fixed between them and Pelagius; but that is not my opinion."—(p. 26.) And pray what is the *value* of Mr. C's "opinion," particularly when opposed by the *proof* already adduced?

"They [Arminians] hold and teach a *common grace* given to every child of Adam. They maintain that it *justly* belongs to all,† and all have it in point of fact. *Grace*, therefore, it cannot be, without a gross abuse of language."—(p. 26.)

*Grace is undeserved favor—unmerited kindness.* Will even Mr. C. demur? Now if ten men be in helpless distress, and Mr. C. have it in his power to relieve them, but is not bound to any of them, except simply on the ground of humanity and piety, and should employ one to go and offer these men the means of relief, on his own ground, it would be no favor shown to them: Wherefore? Because he did not, without reason and cause, select four or five from among them, and leave the rest to perish, while it was in the power of his hand to relieve them! Fine logic, this!

God looked upon "a world of sinners lost;" gave his Son to die for them; and as they were all in a *common* destruction, he offered them

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\*The Methodists preach "Christ Jesus, the Lord," "and have no confidence in the flesh;" and even if the great Mr. C. preach another gospel, "let him be anathema!"

†Because of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, Mr. C. would have added, had he possessed common fairness.

all life, and imparted to all ability to accept of the proffered good; and all this not because they deserved it, but because he loved them, and on account of what Jesus did and suffered: but this is no grace—no undeserved favor, shown to perishing souls! So says Mr. C. 'The theological acumen and philological knowledge by which this conclusion is reached, I must be content to leave in the "deep profound" of Mr. C's understanding!

"The grace which gives life, must be *special, distinguishing, efficacious*, for all men are not made alive, for all men have not faith."—(p. 27.)

In the whole paragraph, from which this sentence is taken, Mr. C. assumes the question in debate, (which is, The grace of God cannot be resisted by man,) and without even an attempt to prove it, stands upon his assumption, which we deny, and argues from it with as much assurance as though he had reduced it to a demonstration! "Oracle" as he is, we would like a little more logic than this, just for appearance' sake, if nothing more.

"The end of grace is not as Arminians imagine, to try human virtue, or to test its perseverance or excellency."—(p. 27.)

Pray, Mr. C., where did you learn that Arminians imagine "the end of grace" to be as you have stated? Surely, Sir, you have forgotten the ninth commandment!

What Mr. C. says, on his 28th page, of the improper use, by Methodists, "of such terms as *original sin, grace,*" &c., is either intentional or ignorant abuse. When he attempts to support the allegations there, perhaps we may think it worth while to hear him.

"We believe that none will be finally saved *because* they were better than others, or *because* they have made a better use of their privileges."—(p. 29.)

Let this be universally believed among men, and farewell to morality and virtue! But let us see if it be a Scriptural sentiment. One thing, here, I think remarkable,—there is no attempt to support this assertion, by even a *reference* to Scriptural authority, which is so common a practice of the author elsewhere: "*We believe,*" is the ground on which it rests.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *DOETH the will* of my Father which is in heaven." 未奉命者 "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and

DOETH them, I will liken him unto a wise man which BUILT his house upon a rock: and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not, FOR it was FOUNDED upon a rock.”—(*Mat. VIII*, 21—25.)

“His Lord said unto him, WELL DONE, good and faithful servant: thou hast been FAITHFUL OVER A FEW THINGS, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”——“Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; FOR I was an hungered and YE GAVE ME MEAT, &c.—(*Matth. XXV*, 21, 34, 35.)

“And being made perfect, he [Christ] became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that OBEY him.”—(*Heb.* 5, 9.)

“Blessed are they that DO HIS COMMANDMENTS, THAT THEY MAY HAVE RIGHT to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city.”—(*Rev. XXII*. 14.)

“And beside this, giving all diligence, ADD to your faith virtue,” &c., “FOR IF YE DO THESE THINGS ye shall never fall, FOR so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—(*2 Pet. I*, 5—11.)

These Scriptures are too unequivocal to require comment: and, when opposed to them, who will regard Mr. C’s “We believe?”

“In this matter [being “finally saved”] God has no respect to persons.”—(*p.* 29.) So say Arminians, consistently—so say the Scriptures: but will Mr. C. tell us, what is the difference between “respect to *persons*,” which he here denies, and “*personal* election,” which is a part of his creed! (*see p.* 25.) If he split this hair, he will display a smother, keener edge, than is indicated by any thing which I have seen from his pen.

I see not, if all men have the same grace, and the same atonement, and the same Saviour, why all men must not be saved,” &c.—(*p.* 30.)

Can any one believe that Mr. C., in this place, is really serious? Taking it for granted that he is, however, the great Teacher shall inform him:—“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”—(*John* 3, 19.) They might have loved the light, you perceive, Mr. C., for they “loved darkness RATHER THAN (in preference to) the light, because their deeds were evil:” So that their con-

damnation finally, is not the result of their fall in Adam, nor of any unconditional decree of God, but of their own evil deeds, and their choosing darkness in preference to the light. It is unnecessary to multiply quotations to the same effect, for this one is so clear, that if Mr. C's mind be yet in the dark, the whole Bible, I should think, would fail to enlighten him.

Mr. C. informs us (*p.* 30,) that the "Methodists have zealously opposed the new divinity" of the Presbyterian Church, in the next breath asserting that 'Taylorites and we are on the same foundation; and on the following page, with the most reckless effrontery, assures his readers that "Arminians know no greater *power* in salvation than the human *will*."—We wait for proof; for without this, we cannot take Mr. C's word when he speaks of Arminians. Indeed, the groundless assertions, and almost endless tautologies of this "Sermon," as the author is pleased to call his performance,) which are constantly thrusting themselves upon the reader, with the most dogmatic impudence, and annoying importunity, are enough to disgust any man of good taste or sound judgment.

"If I had no better Saviour than Arminians preach, I should be afraid to confide in him; theirs may do for the perfect and the righteous, but let the ungodly and the sinner, the helpless and the lost, come to my Saviour, &c.—(*pp.* 31, 32.)

Another effort to be ironical; but how any man can indulge in such a temper on such a theme, Mr. C., perhaps, can explain: I know not.

From the 32d to the 37th page, the reader will find a curiosity in literature, theology, and *sermonizing*. Would that I had room and patience to copy it! I give an instance of tautology, however, taken at random from the 32d and 33d pages:—"Their (Saviour) promises them heaven, if they are holy:"—"their Christ promises them life if they persevere:"—"their (Saviour) always promises conditionally." Here we have the same thing in substance asserted thrice over on two pages! Nor is this a solitary instance.

The whole mass, (*p.* 32-37,) with a very few exceptions, is a tissue of calumny and misrepresentation; and being supported only by Mr. C's *assertion*, the ground upon which it rests would constitute any attempt to refute it, a condescension which would be incompatible with the rules of sound argument.

"And now I ask, which religion is the truth?"—(*p.* 37.)



Such a heterogeneous mass as is contained in this pamphlet, was surely never thrown together before, and styled a "Sermon!" and here when we have plodded thus far through it after the author, all the while "in endless mazes lost," we hear him calling upon us to come to a decision—"Which religion is the truth." We are truly glad, however, to get once more into the light and fresh air, and to learn what Mr. C. drives at; for until we came to this question, we were utterly at a loss to know what he designed, and were just following, step after step, without being able to guess where he would next set his foot. Now will Mr. C. please look back upon his performance, and tell us seriously, in the light of common sense, if he really think any other man than himself can come to any definite conclusion from the chaos through which we have passed up to this point! All that I can perceive is, that Presbyterianism is represented as being "above all praise," while all other *'isms*—Romanism, Baptism, Methodism, Protestant Episcopalianism, and all—are spoken of, or alluded to, as evil things, unworthy the attention of man; and all of them, (except so far as they embrace Mr. C's peculiarities,) as being ruinous as Deism to the interests of the soul! If this be not "the thread of the narrative," thus far, I frankly confess, I have lost it.—"Which religion is the truth?" Solemly, Mr. C., were I called upon to answer this question, from what has gone before, I would reply,—I think the representations too *ex parte*, and too much prompted by prepossession and prejudice, to pretend to form a judgment in the premises: and besides, until now, I thought that all sects of Christians professed the same religion; that of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"When I hear of the wonderful works, \*\*\*\*\* the institutions and benevolence of men, as connected with the kingdom of God, I do fear, that those who glory in these things, have never had a glimpse of the *wonderful work of God* in redemption"—(p. 38.)

When Mr. C. informs us who they are who "*glory*" in these things, if he bring *proof* of the fact, perhaps he may be heard: though he has cried, "*Wolf!*" so long and loud in this "Sermon," that even if the Wolf were come, were Mr. C. to give the alarm it would scarce be heeded. One would suppose, did not charity forbid, that Mr. C's "Church" were doing nothing in the great Christian charities and benevolent efforts of the day, and that sheer envy had prompted these invidious remarks.

"If I had all the inherent personal virtue and merit of all the mere men that ever have lived, since the fall, and that ever shall live, to the end of time,—prophets, apostles, martyrs, popes, cardinals, bishops, Wesleys, Fletchers, the canonized monks, friars, circuit riders, and all, condensed in my own person and made mine, I should count it but a negative quantity in the judgment of God."—(p. 38.)

One is at a loss here, which most to admire—the flowing eloquence and beauty of the style—the conglomeration of lights compressed within the sentence—the dignity and sublimity of the ideas—the *peculiarly* evangelical sentiments expressed—or the spirit which gave rise to, and runs through the period.

Surely (if one can be serious here,) Mr. C. must imagine that he has shed forth an effulgent ray upon the dark minds around him! I take it he must have supposed that some of his dear, elect "congregation and Church," were in danger of trusting for salvation in some of the "Wesleys," or "Fletchers," or "circuit riders!" The ignorance "of the fundamental truths of the religion of Jesus," (p. 16,) which exists in Mr. C's "Church," if they require such teaching as the above, must be depraved and pitiable indeed, and exceedingly discouraging to the heart of their pious Pastor!

If Wesley had never preached, nor Fletcher written, or if now the "circuit riders" (how *chaste* and *dignified*!) were all expatriated, Mr. C. could enjoy himself in all the sentimental luxuries of Calvinism, proper, and feast in quiet upon the spiritual comforts arising from the assurance that he is elected to eternal life, no matter what may be the state of his heart and conduct while on earth. (What a *wholesome* doctrine! and how very *full of comfort* to the man who *loves his sins*!!) Then, probably, his profound and eloquent "Sermon, preached before the Presbyterian Church at Cheraw," had never seen the light! and, by the way, what a pity that so highly finished a literary and theological production should have been suppressed! Mr. C's "Church" will "request" an enlargement of the *second* edition, I hope, when it is *called for*, to supply the demand. I think it probable, Mr. C., that the "circuit riders" will continue to increase in the land, and spread more and more, the doctrines of the Bible. But in the meantime, don't despair: your beloved Calvinism, in all likelihood, will continue its sickly existence during your day.

"Should we with Papists worship the images of Saints, or with

Methodists gape and wonder at the images of the devotion, the self-denial, the wisdom, the achievements, or the wonderful works of Wesley, or any other mere *man*, if we were in Christ Jesus?"—(p. 38.)

Surely, Mr. C. thinks that he is "doing God service" by persecuting and misrepresenting the Methodists!—"The Papists worship images," and are, therefore, *idolaters*; and Mr. C., by vile and graceless inuendo, places Methodists by their side in this respect. A new exemplification of his calumny and bigotry! Did Mr. C. ever read the fable of the Serpent and the File?

The evidence by which we may determine whether we are of the true religion, is the next topic: but here, repetitions, diffuseness of manner, without clearing up any thing, and unchristian insinuation, are as glaring as in the attempt (*pp.* 32-37,) to draw a contrast between orthodoxy and Arminianism. I will touch on a few points:

"The fruits which demonstrate the truth of a religion are not the multitude of converts."—(p. 39.)

But if in this multitude the fruit of the Spirit dwell, and be exemplified in their life, so that they live to the glory of God, I suppose even Mr. C. would not object to a multitude of seals to his ministry. But Mr. C. can see nothing in Methodists, save their "*multitude*;"—in heart, and life, and doctrine, they are a dark, vile, ungodly body of people! This arises, no doubt, from his peculiar tact for looking at the dark spots in every system, except his own beloved "Presbyterian Church," to which, however, he has "no bigoted attachment," only loving "her for her glorious testimony!" I hope the reader will not suppose that this is *gaping* "at the devotion &c. of Wesley, or any other mere *man*;" it is merely *gaping* at the "glorious testimony" of the "Presbytertan Church," which is not a "mere MAN," but a BODY of *mere men*, and Mr. C., himself, part and parcel of that body! Good, modest man! how consistent he is!!

"Which doctrine glorifies God, his love, his mercy," &c.—(p. 39.)

By placing Mr. C's doctrine and that of the Methodist E. Church in juxtaposition, the reader may easily decide:—

*Mr. C's doctrine.*

"God, from all eternity, did unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass."—('Then sin, of course, is of God's appointment, for it "comes to pass.")

"By the decree of God for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death."

"These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

"Those of mankind who are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, without any foresight of faith," &c. "in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes, moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace."

\*\*\*\*\*"Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, efficaciously called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved but the elect only."

"The rest of mankind, God was pleased, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by and ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice." (Reader, pause!—could more absurd and capricious and cruel tyranny be ascribed to Beelzebub himself, than is here attributed to the "God of all grace?" Blessed be God! this is not written in the Bible.)

I might go on, but I forbear: enough is written. I have quoted from the "*Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church*," Chap. III., Sec. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

*Doctrine of the M. E. Church.*

"The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual: and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone," &c.

"We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings," &c. —(*Doctrines of the Methodist E. Church, Art. 9, 20.*)



Again: "Who say they are righteous and despise others?"—(p. 40.)

Let Mr. C's pamphlet answer: for though he disclaims any such thing, and affects to think that the "Presbyterians are desperate sinners," and would not for the world mention the works of the elect, yet he arrogantly lays claim to the only true faith, and though he would hide "the spirit of the thing," by which he segregates the chosen seed, with himself at their head, it is easily discernible beneath the flimsy veil he has thrown over it; and is, ever and anon, saying, by inevitable inference, "We are holier than thou!"

"Who talk of their own perfect love, and who of the *perfect* love of God?"—(p. 41.)—that is, as a mark that we are in the favor of God.

Will Mr. C. please tell us where the "*perfect* love of God" is spoken of, except in his "Sermon?" When the Apostle speaks of love in *man*, he uses the adjective; without it man might have supposed love a lax principle, which would chime in with his depraved and impure nature. Hence we read, "Herein is our love made *perfect*;" "There is no fear in love; but *perfect* love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made *perfect* in love."—(1 *Jno.* IV., 17, 18.)

Once more: "Who shun the light of fair discussion and open day?"—(p. 41.)

Not the Methodists, Mr. C. Witness their numerous pulpits and publications, and their numerous ministers, ever ready to defend the truth.

"*Fair* discussion:"—How well that expression comports with Mr. C's performance!

The signs, (a few of which I have noticed as samples, for the sake of those who may run lightly over this "Sermon,") by which Mr. C. would have us distinguish the "true religion," are not worthy of serious observation. The oblique charges contained in them are too malignantly libellous, and the spirit which prompted them, too low to exist among Christians, or to receive the attention of the good or the wise.

Mr. C. next insinuates (p. 42.) that the Arminians would gladly succumb, and affects to tell us upon what grounds they offer peace to the "elect;" but I cannot condescend to follow him.

In exhorting his people to spurn the "proffered peace," and to

“witness a good confession,” he says,—“We must come out from among them, and *be separate*.”—(p. 42.)

Blessed segregated Presbyterian Church! the pillar and ground of the faith! were it not for thy “glorious Confession and Catechism,” “Christ and his Gospel” would surely be without witness in the earth!

The paragraph which occupies greater part of page 44, is a fine attempt to be declamatory, though it fails to touch the feelings very particularly, except to produce the calm indignation, which arises from the consciousness of not meriting the insinuated invective, which is evidently intended.

“I war against Arminianism, \* \* \* whether with the rough garment she penetrate the wilderness,” &c., “or in the dogmatic confidence of ignorance, she hectors, and terrifies, and deludes the ignorant, the simple, and the poor,” &c.—(p. 44.)

Here, Mr. C. seems to labor to be insulting, and when I read this, I felt on the point of being offended; but I thought of the couplet of the poet, and remained in peace;—

“A decent, sensible, and well-bred man,  
Will not offend me, and no other *can*.”

“If this system [Arminianism] were content to take her true position among the *powers of this world*, as a means of mere moral amelioration, a branch of the police, a good thing politically, a civil expedient to repress the licentiousness, excess, profligacy, and folly, of wealth, of fashion, and of pride; to tame the ferocity of outrage and brutality, or to chain the violence of drunkenness; as citizens of the country we may let her pass. But when she assumes to be an oracle of the *doctrine* of Christ, she must be resisted even unto death.”—(pp. 44, 45.)

Mr. C. asserts that Methodism is one of the results of infidelity; (pp. 10, 11;) and here declares that this result of an infidel principle, which is “opposed to, and subversive of the doctrine of Christ,” is “a good thing politically,” and calculated to repress the “licentiousness, excess, profligacy and folly of men,” and to “tame the ferocity of outrage and brutality” among them, as well as “to chain the violence of drunkenness.” Truly, Mr. C. writes as if he were a “monomaniac,” indeed! Infidelity, “a good thing politically!” Infidelity calculated to lead men from vice to virtue! How Fanny Wright and her followers would exult in this conclusion, legitimately drawn from Mr. C’s “Sermon!”

But "if this system were content" to accomplish all this, "as citizens of the country," the "elect" "may let her pass!" Only, "let her pass?" What, the Presbyterian Church may not aid in introducing and advancing such "amelioration!" I bless God that the Presbyterian Church has not acted upon that principle, though Mr. C. evidently teaches it; and though the Presbyterians of Cheraw, in compliance with his dictate, may stand aloof, thus do not Presbyterians elsewhere.—"*We may let her pass.*"—What praiseworthy condescension and forbearance!

"But when she assumes to be an oracle of the *doctrine* of Christ, she must be resisted even unto death."

If Mr. C. can only confirm himself and his hearers in the dogmas of Calvin, which he is pleased to denominate "the doctrine of Christ," he seems to have no ambition to better the condition of men, morally, physically, or politically; and if the Methodists will leave to him and his brethren the control of the *doctrine*, they may *effect* as much good in these respects as they please, among men; for he has no mind to do: his province is all *belief*.—"Show me thy faith without thy works, (says an Apostle,) and I will show thee my faith by my works.—(*James II*, 18.)

—"She must be resisted even unto death."—

Mr. C. does not mean, I hope, as the Calvinists of Germany "resisted" the Arminians at and after the Synod of Dort; i. e., by killing some and expatriating others; nor as Calvin, himself, resisted Castellio and Servetus, banishing the one, and, at least, consenting to the death of the other, on account of their religious principles.

"The fact is, there can be no honest or cordial union among Arminians, [i. e., Methodists] and true Presbyterians."—(*p. 45.*)

I really think Mr. C. has hit the truth at last; for, allowing that Presbyterians embrace the views and imbibe the spirit of this bigoted pamphlet, they are quite too *oracular* and *peculiar* a people to mingle with such heretics as Methodists are, Mr. C. being judge; and it is a great pity that he and his followers cannot live miraculously, or on the fabled food of the chameleon, for intercourse with common people may possibly contaminate them, and obscure their "glorious testimony to Christ and his gospel!"

But, seriously, does Mr. C. express the views, and manifest the spirit of Presbyterians? I confess, I am very loath to think so.

"I love her [the Presbyterian Church] for her glorious *testimony*, and for her Scripture discipline, order and worship; and because she scorns to bring the neck of her children under the *yoke of man*. Look at her standards, and see that when she touches conscience she hath the word, *Thus saith the Lord*; and so her household are free from the doctrines, traditions, and dominion of men: her communion are, or ought to be, a family of children, not of slaves."—(p. 45.)

Mr. C. is so dexterous at charging his "neighbors" obliquely, of just any thing which may occur to him at the moment, that a person of any dignity would scorn the condescension of a reply, unless there were some show of supporting his allegations, and probably he would not have written such libellous insinuations, had he remembered that the ninth commandment is, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." But I am losing sight of what Mr. C. tells us in his Appendix, of "time for *reflection*," before publishing his "Sermon;"—aye, and his admitting, it is sinful in its spirit; and I conclude that the whole matter resulted from the fact, that "God from all eternity did unchangeably ordain" that he should write the "Sermon;" and, though upon "*reflection*," he saw sin in its spirit, that he should publish it to the world! I am sure, this is Mr. C's only excuse; and, granting the truth of it, it must be admitted as quite sufficient.

But after all, I may wrong Mr. C., which I certainly do not design; for as the Presbyterian Church is composed of the "elect," it may be, they are not held accountable to any authority, in the church among *men*, whatever may be their conduct. Whether this, or the other, is what he intends, I cannot pretend to determine.

"My brethren, say not that we are free of this leaven of the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees; it is among us as a denomination."—(p. 45.)

Can it be possible that such soul-destroying error has found a lodgment among Mr. C's people? Then certainly it cannot be surprising to find among the despicable Methodists an infidel principle; though it must seem a *little* odd that this principle should produce the most opposite results;—results, which, on the one hand, are "opposed to, and subversive of, the doctrine of Christ," and on the other producing the most beneficial "*moral amelioration*." Now what is the legitimate conclusion? Simply, clearly, this,—If we wish the most salutary amelioration of our condition, *morally* and *politically*, but at last



to be among the "reprobates" in eternity, we may embrace Methodism; but if we wish to be among the "elect" in heaven, without much, if any, regard to our conduct here, (for "men are not finally saved because they were better than others, or made a better use of their privileges,") we must embrace the absurd doctrinal dogmas of Calvinism which Mr. C. sets forth and defends. What a pleasing emollient to the unrenewed heart of the "carnally minded" man!—Is Mr. C. offended? I submit to common sense and sound judgment, that I have only followed his train of remarks to its fair, legitimate conclusion: it is his own, not mine.

I think the testimony of Mr. Buck (who is, I suppose, as worthy of a respectful hearing, even, as Mr. C.,) may, here, be properly introduced. He was a Calvinistic Minister of the Gospel. Hear him:—

"At the time when this [the Methodist] Society was formed, the whole kingdom of England was tending fast to infidelity. 'It is come,' says Bp. Butler, 'I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry, but that it is now, at length, discovered to be fictitious, and accordingly they treat it as if in the present age this were an argument among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule; as it were, by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.' "There is every reason to believe," adds Mr. Buck, "that the Methodists were the instruments of stemming this torrent." *agree*

"As to their success in doing good," continues Mr. B., "it is evident that though many ignorant enthusiasts have been found among them, yet no people have done more to moralize mankind than they; nor have they rested here; they have not only contributed to render thousands better members of society, but have been the instruments of promoting their spiritual and eternal interests. Their simplicity of language, fervor of address, patience in opposition, unweariedness in labor, piety of conduct, and dependence on Almighty God, are certainly worthy of the greatest praise, and call for the imitation of many who unjustly condemn them."—(*Buck's Theo. Dict., Art. Meth.*)

The difference between these two witnesses is, that Mr. Buck, who testifies favorably, was a "mere man," though he had ample means of knowing "whereof he affirms;" while Mr. C., who absolutely li-

bels his "neighbors," seems to arrogate the character of an "*oracle of the doctrine of Christ*," at the same time closing his eyes and stopping his ears against the sources of information with which he is surrounded.

Of Mr. C's concluding advice to his "beloved hearers," I have nothing to say in addition to the remarks on another page, except to subjoin, that the same *sinful* spirit which characterizes the other parts of the "Sermon," is manifest in its close: instance, his advice to his people, if under certain circumstances, to "go to the Methodists," notwithstanding their "infidelity in principle," "which is opposed to, and subversive of the doctrine of Christ;" or, "even to Popery," which Mr. C. does admit to be a little worse than Methodism itself. What circumstances can justify a Christian in going into an assembly of infidels, and joining in their false worship? Yet this is, substantially, the advice which Mr. C. gives to his people. But what can justify "a minister of Jesus" in giving such advice to the people of God, when he says of those with whom he would advise them to worship,—*"They have toiled in vain, to separate their faith from Pelagian and Popish infidelity;"*—(p. 23);—*"I abhor their religion;"*—(p. 26);—*"She [Arminianism, that is, their religion] is a child of the devil, and an enemy of all righteousness. I deny her Christ, I deny her gospel?"*—(p. 44.) *"Consistency is a jewel!"*

Mr. C. says, (*Ap. p. 1.*) *"As to his confidence, it is not in his own opinions, but in God."*

Here follow a few of Mr. C's "opinions," and he will confer a great favor by showing where God supports them, or gives him a warrant for holding or teaching them:—

*"The Arminian system is a false and dangerous religion; and in its proper principles subversive of the only foundation of gospel grace. I do believe that the true doctrine of Christ is opposed and denied by your [the Methodist] denomination."*—(p. 3.)

Mr. C's "opinion" is, that Methodism is a result of "infidelity in principle."—(pp. 10, 11.)

*"Arminianism, which the Methodists preach, is a system of anti-Christ."*—(p. 11.)

Mr. C. warns his people against "Arminianism, a system which denies the *doctrine of Christ*."—(p. 15.)

Mr. C's "opinion" is, that "*modern Methodists*" are worse than

"old Arminians,"—that is to say, that while *these* were Deists, admitting the existence of God, but denying Christ, *those* are Atheists, denying the very being of God.—(*p. 25, and the note there.*)

Mr. C's "opinion" is, there is no difference between Arminians and Pelagians; (*p. 26;*) but "when the very basis and corner stone of each system is discovered, it is found to be identical."—(*p. 30.*)

"Arminians know no greater *power* in salvation than the human *will*. This is their omnipotent and efficacious Saviour; their trust is in the flesh, upon their own principles."—(*p. 31.*)

Now will Mr. C. give us the quotations from Arminian and Methodist writers, (work, volume and page,) which will prove to any candid mind, that the above "opinions" of Mr. C. are not false and groundless; and then show us, (Book, ch., and verse,) where God gives him any "*confidence*" in holding such "opinions?"

But, especially, will the reader, after looking over the above opinions of Mr. C., turn to page 31, near the foot, and read to page 39, of Mr. C's pamphlet, and then read on page 46, the following advice given by him to his people:—"Should you be cast into a neighborhood where the Presbyterian minister has denied our faith, and preaches Arminian doctrines, go not thou into that synagogue. Go to the Baptist, &c., go to the Methodist:" and then ask this very consistent "minister," to show him where is the Scripture in which God inspires him with "*confidence*" when giving such advice to his "elect" people, in reference to such antichristian infidels as he represents the Methodists to be?

"But in this matter the controversy is not between man and man, but between *man* and *God*."—(*Ap. p. 1.*)

To make the above assertion good for any thing, Mr. C. must *prove* that Arminianism (or Wesleyan Methodism) is what he affirms it is. When he has done this, he will have no more to do; the people will soon fall off from it. But I here beg leave to *inform* Mr. C. that people generally do not take *assertion* (with which his "Sermon" abounds,) in place of *proof*. And I would remind him that we want enough, from the writer quoted, to give his full view of the subject, and not merely an isolated part, taken out of its proper connexion; for in this way, we can prove from the Bible itself that Atheism is true.

Mr. C. says, (*Ap. p. 1.*) that "he hates, with a perfect hatred, the

*doctrine of Arminianism.*" "The doctrine of Arminianism," as Mr. C. represents it, I don't wonder that he should hate; but, as he represents it, it has no existence, except in partizan minds, who can condescend even to misrepresentation for party purposes.

"We do deny that Arminianism is Christianity."—(*Ap. p. 2.*)

Before Mr. C. is even worthy of a hearing in this denial, he must, first, define, on the one hand, what Arminianism, and, on the other, what Christianity is; and then he must prove his definitions to be true, not by assertion, but by sound argument, or quotations from Scripture and Arminian writers, and then show that they are opposed to each other.

Mr. C. has foully misrepresented the Methodists: he has done this either *wilfully* or *ignorantly*. If the former, he is referred to *Prov.* XIX, 5, 9: and *Acts* VIII, 22: if the latter, he is perfectly inexcusable, for the means of information and correction are quite within his reach; and in either case, the "Presbyterian Church at Cheraw," stands or falls with him, for they aid and abet him, in the publication of his libellous "Sermon."

Having followed Mr. C. to the close, I find that my work is rather a zig-zag performance, but such it must necessarily be because of the exceedingly diffuse and immethodical character of the "Sermon." I will add a few closing reflections:—

1. Mr. C's manner reminds one of a man

"Rushing impetuous to his friend's relief,"

that he may deliver him from the jaws of death! and if Calvinism were uttering its dying groans, and the Presbyterian Church were in the death-struggle, Mr. C. could hardly make more ado; while Methodism is belabored as if she were the murderer! Pray, keep cool, Mr. C.; Methodists have no wish to injure the Presbyterian Church, even were it in their power to do so; but they most sincerely labor to remove the absurdities of Calvinism.

2. Woodsmen tell us that the surest death to a snake is to exasperate him, till, in his fury, he bite himself. Mr. C. seems to be performing this painful operation, being vexed beyond endurance by the success of Methodism, and having tried in vain to reach her with his envenomed fang. The circulation of Mr. C's "Sermon," will do no little toward the destruction of Calvinistic fatalism.

3. Why is Mr. C. so uneasy? Can the unconditional, unchange-



able purpose of God, which Calvinists teach, ever fail? Can one of the "elect" be lost? Can one of the "reprobates" ever enter Heaven? If these questions be answered affirmatively, then Mr. C. must give up his Genevan "decrees;" if they be answered negatively, then I should like to see a satisfactory answer to this query,—“Why does Mr. C. preach to men?” I suppose his preaching cannot save any of the elect, and as to apprising them of danger, there can be no danger, for if God's decrees be unconditional, they **MUST INEVITABLY** be saved; and, on the other hand, surely his preaching does not help to damn the unfortunate reprobate!—I say *unfortunate*, for, on Mr. C's ground, they cannot be guilty, their deeds being *necessitated*.

4. I have two or three little commodities, called arguments, which are rather scarce, by the by, in Mr. C's "Sermon," but which I think will convince even him, that Calvinism leads, direct, to Universalism.

(1.) Mr. C., Do you not believe that all those for whom Christ (sincerely) died shall inevitably be saved in Heaven? Your answer, Calvinistically, must be "Yes."

(2.) Do you not believe that Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man? (*Heb. 29.*) You dare not answer "No!"

(3.) Then upon your own ground, "*Every man*" must be saved in Heaven! That is, Universalism is true.

Again:

(1.) Do you not believe that all those who are drawn by God, come to Christ and shall be saved at last?

(2.) Jesus says, "I will draw all men unto me."—(*Jno. 12, 32.*)

(3.) Consequently, "*all men*" must be saved.

Once more:—

(1.) Does not God "ordain" according to his will? If "God did ordain whatsoever comes to pass," he *ordained* that sinners should live and act just as we see them living and acting: that is, It is his *will* that they should live and act precisely as they do, and in no other manner; so that they are *doing* the *will* of God.

(2.) They that *do* the *will* of God shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.—(*Matt. 7, 21.*)

(3.) Therefore, sinners—indeed, *all men*—must be saved in Heaven; for, if Calvinism be true, all men are *doing* the will of God, and cannot do otherwise.

Now let not Mr. C. say that I am speaking monstrous blasphemies.

We want none of his glosses: we wish no prevarication or evasion, but ask, in the name of common sense, and sound, argumentative judgment, are not the foregoing conclusions legitimately drawn from the premises? They are not mine, but are some of the absurd consequences of Calvinism. Methodists teach and believe a system which harmonizes all the parts of the Bible, making that blessed Book its own interpreter, and never so understanding one portion as to contradict another.

5. And now let us review the whole case:—The Methodist E. Church was quietly and successfully engaged in preaching the gospel, and offering neither “peace” nor war to the Presbyterian Church, nor to any other Church, but desiring to be in fellowship and love with all Christian communities; her success grieves and alarms Mr. C., a minister of some *three years’* standing; and as though he were the Atlas upon whom rested the Presbyterian Church, he undertakes, as he thinks, to save and defend her, by doing his utmost to break the heads, and mortify the hearts, and lacerate the sensibilities of his “neighbors” and fellow-citizens. If this be the part of “a minister of Jesus,” we are quite mistaken in our views of that sacred calling. “To his own master,” however, “he standeth or falleth;” and there we leave him.



